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Letter dated 20 July 2004 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 14 July 2004, which I received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Annex

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the monthly report on SFOR operations for May 2004 (see enclosure). I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jaap de **Hoop Scheffer**

Enclosure

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Stabilization Force

1. Over the reporting period (1-31 May 2004), there were 7,880 personnel deployed in the Stabilization Force (SFOR), including 289 troops from non-NATO countries. In addition, there were 25 SFOR personnel deployed in Croatia.

2. There was no change to the status of partner/non-NATO country contributions.

Security

3. During the reporting period, Bosnia and Herzegovina remained stable, with no serious incidents to report. On 18 May 2004, a trial for 11 former Prijedor policemen accused of war crimes against the civilian population began in the Banja Luka Court. It is the first trial for war crimes prosecuted in a Republika Srpska court. On 19 May 2004, the Republika Srpska Parliament issued a declaration calling on all persons indicted for war crimes to surrender and all related authorities to cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Fifteen Tribunal arrest warrants are now listed on the Republika Srpska (Ministry of Internal Affairs Special Police) web site. Included on the site are a number of Bosnian Serb persons indicted for war crimes including, for the first time, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. On 25 May 2004, an SFOR team discovered 71 anti-personnel mines in the house of a member of the local demining team in Otaka. These mines were allegedly collected with the intention of either selling them illegally or replanting them in order to have his contracts extended. Finally, on 29 May 2004, a hand grenade exploded in a nightclub in Stari Grad, the old town section of Sarajevo. Seventeen people were injured in the explosion. After the incident, the man responsible went to the police station and threatened policemen with another grenade. Policemen disarmed him and secured the grenade. There were no significant acts of violence directed against SFOR personnel during the reporting period.

Operational activities

4. SFOR remained engaged with weapons collection,[1] destruction[2] and framework operations.

5. The results of Operation Harvest showed increased success and the necessity of continuing efforts in this area. Local police have continued collecting weapons and ammunition. On 13 May 2004, the Multinational Specialized Unit found a large weapons cache, consisting of some 200 weapons and ammunition, in Ugljevik. On 20 May 2004, SFOR confirmed that a large secret arms depot was found in the wire

[1] The results of weapons turned in/collected from 1 to 31 May 2004 within the framework of Operation Harvest are as follows: small arms: 666; ammunition of less than 20 mm: 236,483 rounds; ammunition between 20 mm and 76 mm: 3,402 rounds; ammunition of more than 76 mm: 1,021 rounds; hand grenades: 6,272; mines: 639; explosives: 188.1 kg; other items (mortars, mortar rounds, rifle grenades, handmade ordnance, rockets, etc.): 17,036.

[2] To support the reduction of unserviceable and obsolete Entity Armed Forces ammunition in order to reduce ammunition quantities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, SFOR has continued to conduct Operation Armadillo II. As at 31 May, the total amount of Republika Srpska Army ammunition destroyed is 1,115 tons.

factory in Cazin. The depot contained more than 10,000 cases for mortar shells, over 2,000 cases for hand grenades and rifle grenades, and a small amount of plastic explosives. The weapons were removed and will be destroyed by the Fifth Corps of the Federation Military. On 24 May 2004, SFOR troops, supported by the explosive ordnance disposal teams, discovered a large cache near Lopare in the Republika Srpska. Two 82-mm recoiliess rifles, two radios, nearly 100 AK-47 rifles, and four tripods were among the findings. A great amount of ammunition was also recovered. On 29 May 2004, during another operation, SFOR discovered five weapon caches in the general area of Novakovici. Of note, nine mortars, 175 mortar rounds, and various ammunition were found in caches in barns and garages near houses. Investigations continue to determine the original source of these weapons.

6. On the afternoon of 14 May 2004, SFOR detained Bosnian Serb Milovan Bjelica, a suspected Radovan Karadzic supporter, outside a café in Sokolac. The operation took place without incident. Bjelica was transferred to a secure SFOR facility for further questioning. In a series of further searches, documents and other items were removed for analysis.

Compliance by the parties

7. On 18 May 2004, the Parliament adopted the new Defence Law and the Army Service Law. On 21 May, the Council of Ministers approved the book of rules on the internal organization of the Defence Ministry, thereby ensuring a continuation of the defence reform process. The Presidency also decided on the distribution of general officers. The vetting process, which was led by SFOR, has been finished and all general posts are delivered to the entities. Work on the implementation of the structure of the armed forces continues with discussions on the internal detailed organization and responsibilities of State-level Ministry of Defence, Joint Staff and Operational Command. SFOR has established a new initiative to assist and advise in the implementation of the structure. The next phase in restructuring is an overall equipment plan that will focus on common equipment. In addition, the formation of a single State-level demining unit still has to be incorporated within the overall structure. The Republika Srpska Ministry of Defence announced on 27 May 2004 that the planned dismissals of Ministry employees and active members of the Republika Srpska military service are in their final stages. As at 25 May 2004, severance wages have been paid to 1,882 members of the Republika Srpska Army and to 184 employees of the Ministry of Defence. Furthermore, the Federation Army announced that it would conduct additional personnel reductions by 31 May 2004.

8. On 27 May 2004, Miroslav Nikolic, Minister of Defence of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, acting on direction from the SFOR Commander, Major General Packett, signed the order for the forced retirement of three senior Bosniak officers in the Federation Army. The three officers were not given SFOR approval for promotion to General in the new combined armed forces and were recommended for immediate retirement.

9. During the reporting period, the Entity Armed Forces have carried out normal training activities, in compliance with the military provisions of the Dayton Peace Agreement.

10. There were a total of 261 Entity Armed Forces training and operational activities conducted during the reporting period, including 92 for the Republika Srpska Army and 169 for the Federation Army. There were a total of 216

movements conducted during the reporting period, including 72 for the Republika Srpska Army and 144 for the Federation Army.

11. The summer demining cycle is now in full swing, with four demining cycles already completed this year. Things are going well as the weather has allowed most tasks to start as planned. The Federation Army has been fully compliant during this reporting period. The Republika Srpska Army still does not have the correct number of demining teams, and a number of letters have been sent to it in relation to this issue.

12. There were a total of 47 inspection and verification visits of weapons and ammunition storage sights conducted during the reporting period — 16 for the Republika Srpska Army and 31 for the Federation Army. One site was closed in May and another seven are pending closure.

Conclusion

13. SFOR has continued to maintain a safe and secure environment and has made significant progress in collecting illegal weapons. Bosnia and Herzegovina's problems remain primarily in the political and economic areas, with crime and corruption as significant areas of concern.